Augustus Caesar and Pax Romana

Nomen:

Spatium:

*Instructions: Today, you are learning about the first emperor of Rome, Augustus Caesar, and the time period in Rome known as the “Pax Romana.” As you read, with your group (or independently) answer the questions.*

*If you are in a group, take turns reading.* Write the name of Reader #1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction**

The Roman Republic was gone. In its place, the government was now an empire (similar to a dictatorship), under the leadership of an emperor.  [The first Roman emperor was Augustus](http://rome.mrdonn.org/emperors.html), the adopted son of Julius Caesar.  He was emperor for 45 years.

When Augustus became the first Roman emperor, some things stayed the same.  Families stayed together in the same home.  Romans worshiped the same gods and honored the elderly, the rich remained rich and the poor remained poor.

However, there were many important changes. The Senate had no power.  People still elected senators but they could only advise the emperor.  The emperor made all laws and passed all taxes.  Women got more rights. Augustus was the first emperor, there would be 140 more.  The Roman empire lasted almost 500 years.

1. What form of government replaced the Roman Republic? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. According to the introduction, what were two of the changes from the Republic to the Empire?
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**The Early Life of Caesar Augustus**

Octavian was the son of Julius Caesar’s niece. The first eighteen years of Octavian’s life were unremarkable, but a surprise in Julius Caesar’s will eventually resulted in him becoming Caesar. He took the name Caesar Augustus, and became the ruler who transformed Rome into the greatest empire of the ancient world.

1. Use the English dictionaries to define the word “unremarkable.” Write the definition:

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Julius Caesar was so popular with the Roman people that the Senate named him dictator for life. For five hundred years, the Roman government relied on two consuls serving one-year terms and taking advice from the Senate. But as dictator, Julius Caesar ruled without considering Roman tradition or having to consult the Senate. Finally, in 44 BCE, a group of enraged senators stabbed the dictator to death.

1. What Latin word does “dictator” come from? (check *Ad Astra* Ch. IV)

What does a dictator do? And how does it connect to the Latin root?

1. Why were the Senators enraged?

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*Switch readers.* Write the name of Reader #2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Caesar’s will decreed that Octavian would be his heir and was to be treated as his adopted son. Caesar’s decision made Octavian one of the richest men in Rome. It also provided Octavian with something even more valuable: the right to call himself Caesar.

1. Why was it important for Octavian to be able to call himself Caesar?

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Two months after Julius Caesar’s murder, Octavian came to Rome to claim his inheritance, but Marc Antony dismissed the young man. Octavian spent the next several months gaining support with the Roman people. He also raised an army. Soldiers throughout the empire were loyal—not to Rome—but to the name Caesar. By the end of 44 BCE, both Marc Antony and Octavian commanded armies, but the two men avoided civil war by making a deal.

1. Who was Marc Antony? Why was he important after Julius Caesar’s death?

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1. Who had the loyalty of the Roman army?

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**The Second Triumvirate**

In 43 BCE, Octavian joined Antony and another general named Lepidus in a partnership historians call the Second Triumvirate. The triumvirate raised money by branding more than 300 wealthy Romans as enemies. They seized the property of the newly designated outlaws and offered rewards to anyone who would kill them. The enemies of Octavian and Marc Antony who could not escape from Rome were killed.

Octavian and Antony forced Lepidus into retirement in 36 BCE. Five years later, Octavian became the sole ruler of Rome upon the death of Marc Antony. Octavian earned the loyalty of the Roman soldiers by providing the men with land. The soldiers retired, but because Octavian was Caesar, he knew he could count on their support if the Senate challenged his authority.

1. Who were the three members of the Second Triumvirate?
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5. What was the purpose of the Second Triumvirate’s bloody attack (also called proscriptions) on the wealthy Romans?

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1. What year did Octavian become the sole leader of Rome? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Switch readers.* Write the name of Reader #3:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Octavian becomes Augustus**

Octavian lived a modest life to avoid the fate of Julius Caesar. He lived in a small house and traveled without bodyguards. Unlike Julius Caesar, Octavian was respectful to the senators. Later in his career, Octavian allowed other men to serve as consuls, but the Senate knew that Octavian controlled the military, so he was the actual ruler of the Roman Empire.

1. Use the English dictionary to define the word “modest”:

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1. Based on this paragraph, what do you learn about how Julius Caesar lived and how he treated the Senate?

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In 27 BCE, Octavian arranged for the Senate to grant him the honorific title Augustus, which means “respected one.” During his rule, the Roman people knew Octavian only as Caesar, but historians, to avoid confusion with his famous granduncle, generally refer to him as Octavian before 27 BCE and Caesar Augustus after that.

1. After what year do historians refer to Octavian as Augustus? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Write one thing that happened to Caesar as Octavian, and one thing that happened to Caesar as Augustus.

Octavian:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Augustus:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Why do you think Augustus was called the “respected one”? What does that tell you about him?

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Caesar Augustus ruled for 41 years, a period that saw Rome develop into a military empire, so historians consider him to be the first Roman emperor. He restored peace and order to Rome after years of civil war, made sure the lands throughout the empire were well run and that taxes were fair. He built roads and bridges, government buildings and massive public baths. “I left Rome a city of marble,” Caesar said, “though I found it a city of bricks.”

1. What do you think Caesar meant when he said, “I left Rome a city of marble, though I found it a city of bricks?”

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1. Think about Augustus’ long reign as emperor. How do his humble beginnings make him more remarkable as a leader?

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The armies of Caesar Augustus conquered most of Western Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. The Romans claimed all of the land surrounding the enormous Mediterranean Sea, which they nicknamed “a Roman lake.” Rome’s army was so powerful that it protected citizens from attack from the tribes who lived beyond the empire.

1. From this paragraph, what do you learn about the military strength of the Roman empire?

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*Switch readers.* Write the name of Reader #4:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Pax Romana**

Historian Edward Gibbon later described the two hundred-years of peace that began with the rule of Caesar Augustus as the *Pax Romana*, or the “Peace of Rome.” This isn’t an entirely accurate title.  There wasn't really peace.

Rome continued to expand the empire, mostly through conquest.  Rome itself was still beset by criminals and sometimes riots.  It is called the *Pax Romana* because the empire itself was stable.  The people knew that there was an emperor to run things and Roman legions to take care of wars and riots.  They didn't have to worry about somebody coming in and conquering Rome and destroying their beautiful city.

1. Use the English dictionary to define the word “beset”:

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Many of Rome's most spectacular and huge construction projects were built during this time period, the period we call the Roman Empire.  Thousands of miles of roads were built to keep the empire united.  Art, literature and theatre flourished and grew.  Rome was at its height.

1. What was the *Pax Romana*?

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1. What do you expect to learn more about as we learn about the Roman Empire?

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